



**Freedom: Volume 2, Series 1: The Wartime  
Genesis of Free Labor: The Upper South: A  
Documentary History of Emancipation, 1861-1867  
(Freedom: A Documentary History of  
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# **Freedom: Volume 2, Series 1: The Wartime Genesis of Free Labor: The Upper South: A Documentary History of Emancipation, 1861-1867 (Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation)**

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As slavery collapsed during the American Civil War, former slaves struggled to secure their liberty, reconstitute their families, and create the institutions befitting a free people. This volume of Freedom presents a documentary history of the emergence of free-labor relations in different settings in the Upper South. At first, most federal officials hoped to mobilize former slaves without either transforming the conflict into a war of liberation or assuming responsibility for the young, the old, or others not suitable for military employment. But as the Union army came to depend on black workers and as the number of destitute freedpeople mounted, authorities at all levels grappled with intertwined questions of freedom, labor and welfare. Meanwhile, the former slaves pursued their own objectives, working within the constraints imposed by the war and Union occupation to fashion new lives as free people. The Civil War sealed the fate of slavery only to open a contest over the meaning of freedom. This volume of Freedom documents an important chapter in that contest.

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